



Emergency Management Accreditation Program

The Emergency Management Accreditation Program (EMAP) is a voluntary assessment and accreditation process for state/territorial, tribal, and local government emergency management programs. In 2003, EMAP began a project funded by FEMA/DHS to conduct assessments of all state and territorial emergency management programs.

EMAP provides:

- A Structure for identifying areas in need of improvement;
- A methodology for strategic planning and justification for resources;
- A catalyst for improved interoperability and professionalism; and
- Strengthened state, territorial, and local preparedness, including sharing of best practices.

EMAP uses collaboratively developed national emergency management standards along with peer assessment teams to evaluate a program's activities (more than just the agency – EMAP looks at a jurisdiction's entire "program"). The standards used, collectively called the EMAP Standard, are based on the NFPA 1600 and were developed by state, local, and federal emergency management practitioners.

Standards for Emergency Management

The EMAP Standard is a broad, scalable set of standards that can be applied to an emergency management program of almost any size. EMAP standards are flexible and scalable, but they are not easy. Key aspects of preparedness and response that received heightened attention after the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks are addressed within the standards, such as continuity of operations and continuity of government planning, alternate emergency operating facilities, and use of an incident management system. The EMAP Standard covers 14 functional areas:

1. **Program Management** covers how a program is structured and organized so that it is capable of coordinating emergency preparedness, mitigation, response, and recovery activities across multiple agencies and organizations.
2. **Laws and Authorities** addresses the legal underpinnings necessary to authorize and conduct an emergency management program
3. **Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment** requires comprehensive assessment and identification of risks, including potential natural and human-caused events, and potential impact of those hazards. These identification and analysis activities,

including current efforts to better identify risks to critical infrastructures, then feed the planning process.

4. **Hazard Mitigation** requires that the program create and implement a strategy to lessen the impacts of disasters. The strategy must take into account results of hazards identification and risk assessments, analysis of impacts of each hazard, and experiences in the jurisdiction, and must prioritize mitigation projects based on loss reduction.
5. **Resource Management** involves methodologies for prompt and effective identification, acquisition, distribution tracking, and use of personnel and equipment needed for emergency functions.
6. **Planning** addresses development and general content of the program's emergency operations plan, strategic plan, mitigation plan, recovery plan, and continuity of operations plan.
7. **Direction, Control and Coordination** presents requirements for the ability to analyze a situation, make decisions for response, direct and coordinate response forces and resources, and coordinate with other jurisdictions. Requires use of a recognized incident management system.
8. **Communications and Warning** requires ability to communicate in a disaster and effectively warn the public. This is the primary area of the standards where communications interoperability and redundancy are addressed.
9. **Operations and Procedures** requires standard operating procedures, checklists, and other instructions to execute the emergency operations plan and other plans and ties procedures back to the hazards previously identified by the jurisdiction.
10. **Logistics and Facilities** requires facilities and a logistics framework capable of supporting response and recovery operations. This includes the requirement for an emergency operations facility.
11. **Training** requires that the program maintain a documented training program for emergency management/response personnel and public officials, including that emergency personnel receive training on the incident management system of the jurisdiction.
12. **Exercises, evaluations and Corrective Action** calls for regularly scheduled exercises, evaluations and corrective actions, including a process for addressing corrective actions.
13. **Crisis Communications, Public Education and Information** requires procedures for disseminating information to the public pre-, during, and post disaster.
14. **Finance and Administration** includes requirement for a financial management framework that complies with applicable government requirements and that allows for expeditious request for and receipt and distribution of funds.

Assessments Provide Structured Peer Evaluation

Baseline assessments using EMAP provide a methodology to evaluate state and territorial emergency management programs against a consistent set of criteria. Assessments identify areas of program activities that need to be addressed, help programs develop prioritized improvement strategies and demonstrate accountability, and help support for requests for additional emergency management resources.

Each assessment includes the following:

- A program's self-assessment to determine its compliance with each of 54 EMAP standards;
- As part of its self-assessment, the program must compile documentation, or evidence, that it will show to the assessor team to demonstrate and verify compliance;
- Documentation or "proofs of compliance", are listed in an online assessment tool provided to registered programs on the EMAP web site;
- The assessor team, which includes five to nine emergency management practitioners from other jurisdictions, spends one working week at the program's location reviewing documentation, conducting interviews, observing activities and recording its findings;
- The team conducts an exit briefing on the last day of the assessment to share its preliminary findings with program personnel; and
- The team prepares an assessment report of its findings. (In an accreditation effort, the report goes through an EMAP committee and commission review process. For a baseline only assessment, the report goes to the program and to DHS).

As assessment report includes whether the program is compliant or non-compliant with 54 standards and reasons for assessors' findings. States and territories have been asked to sign up for a baseline assessment; through the end of March 2003, 12 states have participated in or scheduled their assessments, and several others are considering dates.

EMAP is a tax-exempt non-profit organization created through the collaboration and support of many groups, including the National Emergency Management Association (NEMA), International Association of Emergency Managers (IAEM), U.S. Department of Justice Office of Justice Programs, Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), U.S. Department of Transportation, The Council of State Governments, National Governors Association, National League of Cities, Individual states, and others. EMAP is governed by a nine-member EMAP Commission.